

President Petro Poroshenko. Ukraine is a friend of the United States and it has looked to the West to meet naked Russian aggression.

As President Poroshenko's speech reminded us, there are objectives that bind our countries, such as the pursuit of freedom and representative government. Let's make it clear. We stand with Ukraine. We stand with the Ukrainian people in their struggle against external aggression and we stand with them in their struggle to secure the same kinds of rights and liberties each of us enjoy in America.

THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. On a different matter, today the Senate will consider House legislation to fund the government and address the threats of Ebola and ISIL.

These are important issues. Many Members on both sides plan to support this legislation. I know others have some concerns too. I understand those concerns. I share some of them, but while no bill is perfect, I believe this legislation is worth supporting.

I would like to thank my fellow Kentuckian, Representative HAL ROGERS, for his leadership and work on this bill because it does a lot of important things and all without raising discretionary spending. It would reauthorize important counternarcotics operations that help keep our children and communities safe and it would extend the Internet Tax Freedom Act until December, giving us a chance to secure a permanent extension.

It would block some of the administration's discretionary policies against Kentucky coal and help address the administration's veterans crisis by providing more resources to address the backlog and investigations into potential wrongdoing that is a positive step toward the more comprehensive reforms Republicans would like to see.

Critically, the legislation would provide authorization to train and equip a moderate Syrian opposition ground force, a key component of the President's efforts to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat ISIL.

While I am concerned about the ability of the coalition to generate sufficient combat power to defeat ISIL within Syria, I do support the President's proposal to begin the program. The authorization is of limited duration and it now contains important reporting requirements that will allow Congress to assess and oversee this program to measure whether the mission is actually being accomplished.

The Ebola crisis is another area where the President deserves congressional support. As you know, he recently announced several messages to contain the spread of the disease in Africa and prevent it from reaching our shores.

Accordingly, the bill contains additional resources to support research and bolster our Nation's effort in as-

sisting Africa to manage this growing crisis.

In summary, this isn't perfect legislation, but it begins to address many of our constituents' top concerns without raising discretionary spending. It positions us for better solutions in the months to come.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 35 minutes for the purposes of engaging in a colloquy with my colleagues on the issue of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, tomorrow is the sixth anniversary of the application for approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline. Six years. Six years ago, September 19, 2008, the TransCanada company applied for a permit for approval to cross the Canadian border to build the Keystone XL Pipeline from Hardisty, Canada, down to Cushing and ultimately the gulf coast, to provide not only oil from Canada but to move oil from States such as my State of North Dakota, of light, sweet Bakken crude, oil from Montana, to our refineries here in the United States. Six years ago, that application was filed, effective tomorrow. So we are here today to talk about the need not only for a decision on the Keystone XL Pipeline but for approval of this vitally important project.

The reality is we can make this country energy secure, energy independent, working with our closest friend and ally, Canada. But to do it we not only need to develop all of our resources, our energy resources in this country, and work with Canada as they develop their energy resources, but we need the infrastructure to safely, effectively, efficiently, dependably move that energy to where it is needed, to our consumers.

That is what the Keystone XL Pipeline project is all about. This is truly about building the roads, the rails, the pipelines, the transmission, the energy infrastructure we need as a vital part of our energy plan for this country. We have bipartisan support. We have 57 Senators who support this legislation—57. The reality is I think by next year we will have 60.

So while we sit here and wait—now for 6 years, effective tomorrow 6 years, waiting for a decision from the President on the Keystone XL Pipeline—ultimately I believe this decision will be made by the American people, as it always is and as it always should be. Because I believe that after these elections in November as we go into next year we will not only have 57 Senators who support this project, we will have over 60.

Then Congress will pass legislation, a bill that we have submitted, a bipartisan bill we have pending before this

body right now. We will pass it. We will attach it to something the President will not veto. The House has already passed this legislation. Because over 70 percent, I think in the most recent poll, of the American people want this project. They want this project approved.

So here after 6 years—we are going to talk about some of the history of this and all of the work we have done. But before I do that, I want to turn to my colleague from Wyoming, somebody who is incredibly knowledgeable when it comes to energy, somebody who has worked on energy in all different aspects, somebody who truly understands that, look, for the benefit of the American people to build our energy future we not only need to produce that energy, we need the infrastructure to transport it safely, effectively, and well.

I wish to call on the Senator from Wyoming for his remarks on this sixth anniversary of the application, waiting for approval, waiting for a decision from the administration on the Keystone XL Pipeline, for his thoughts and for his comments. I turn to the good Senator from Wyoming.

Can the Senator give us his thoughts as to why this project is still awaiting a decision from the administration, after the President told us, told our caucus last year, at a caucus we had here in an adjacent room, that we would have a decision by the end of 2013, why we are here still awaiting a decision on behalf of the American people?

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I appreciate and want to salute the significant leadership we have seen on this issue from the Senator from North Dakota. He has been a stalwart fighter, very focused on this issue, and focused on putting together a bipartisan coalition of supporters. Americans want the jobs, they want the energy, they want action. We have an opportunity, but we have been waiting 6 long years.

The Senator from North Dakota is absolutely right. It was at a meeting in the Republican conference where the President of the United States came in. I asked the specific question: When will we expect an answer so we can get moving with the jobs and the energy that the American people are asking for?

President Obama said: Well, by the end of the year. He said that almost a year and a half ago. It was the end of the year 2013 that the promise was going to be fulfilled. Now here we are halfway—beyond halfway—through 2014. Nothing yet. Not a thing from the White House, a White House held hostage by environmental extremists who are trying to block important jobs and important energy and this important project.

We are here in the Senate today and the majority leader is ready to close this place down until after the elections. He closed it down—if you count the number of days from the beginning